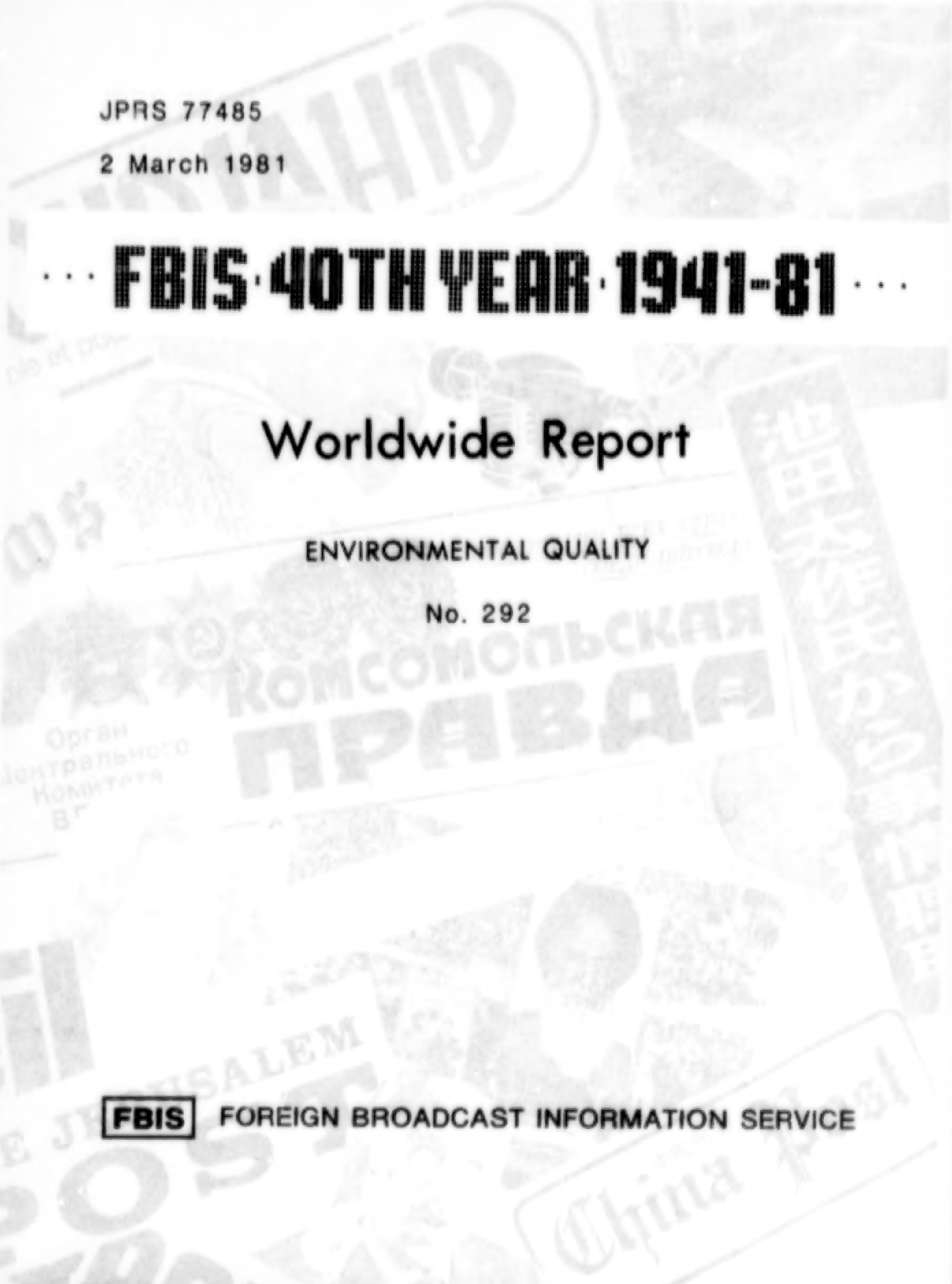

JPRS 77485

2 March 1981

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Worldwide Report

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

No. 292

FBIS FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

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26 February 1981

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On behalf of all of us in FBIS I wish to express appreciation to our readers who have guided our efforts throughout the years.

JPRS 77485

2 March 1981

WORLDWIDE REPORT

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NEW LEGISLATION ON POLLUTION CONTROLS

Hong Kong SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 31 Jan 81 p 1

[Article by Roy Edmonds]

[Text] The Government is toughering the law on environmental protection and backing its move with a massive increase in spending.

The annual outlay on environmental protection is to be increased at least four-fold to $20 million.

Detailed regulations are to be formulated by a new Environmental Protection Agency unveiled in yesterday's Government Gazette.

The new legislation will be followed by the establishment of "control units" to police them.

According to the man who will head the new agency, Dr Stuart Reed, inspectors will implement tough, new regulations in four critical areas: noise control, waste disposal, water and air pollution.

The move signals the coming-of-age of the former Environmental Protection Unit and, with it, the expenditure and commitment to environmental control.

Dr Reed said that spending in this area over the past year amounted to between $4 million and $5 million. But he expects this to increase up to five-fold by 1982-3.

The existing unit already has an establishment of 62, of which about two-thirds have been filled.

New control units as anticipated by Dr Reed will necessitate their own specialised inspectorate, which must first be trained.

The responsibilities of the new agency are:

- Forming policy in all fields of environmental protection.
- Overseeing and co-ordinating environmental improvements.
- Monitoring pollution levels.
- Research and analysis to assess environmental impact of development projects. (Power stations, industrial estates and Government projects will all come under EPA's microscope.)
- To act as consultant to other departments on environmental matters.
- Training environmental control staff.

The new agency, complete with a commissioner, springs from a unit of 10 staff members five years ago. Dr Reed was formerly known as environmental protection adviser.

A Government spokesman commented: "Strengthening of the unit has led to the creation of an organisation of the nature, size and executive functions which made it appropriate for the unit to be separated from the Government Secretariat.

"The Secretary for the Environment will continue to be responsible for environmental protection policies."

Dr Reed said the announcement was the confirmation of something that had evolved over a period of time.

"It started off as a small fledgling under the wing of the Environment Branch. We have been setting up legislation over the past couple of years.

"Now we have got staff and equipment posted and are starting to put the flesh on the bones of the legislation," he said.

"The stage has been reached where the need of the new operation is being acknowledged."

The capacity to carry out its own research and development will be an important step forward for the former unit.

"We will be able to get our own information rather than assuming Hongkong is like somewhere else. We have bought $2 million worth of monitoring equipment," said Dr Reed.

"We will be developing another layer which will be control units in other departments.

"We have been developing detailed legislation and when we have this we will have inspectors to go and implement the legislation.

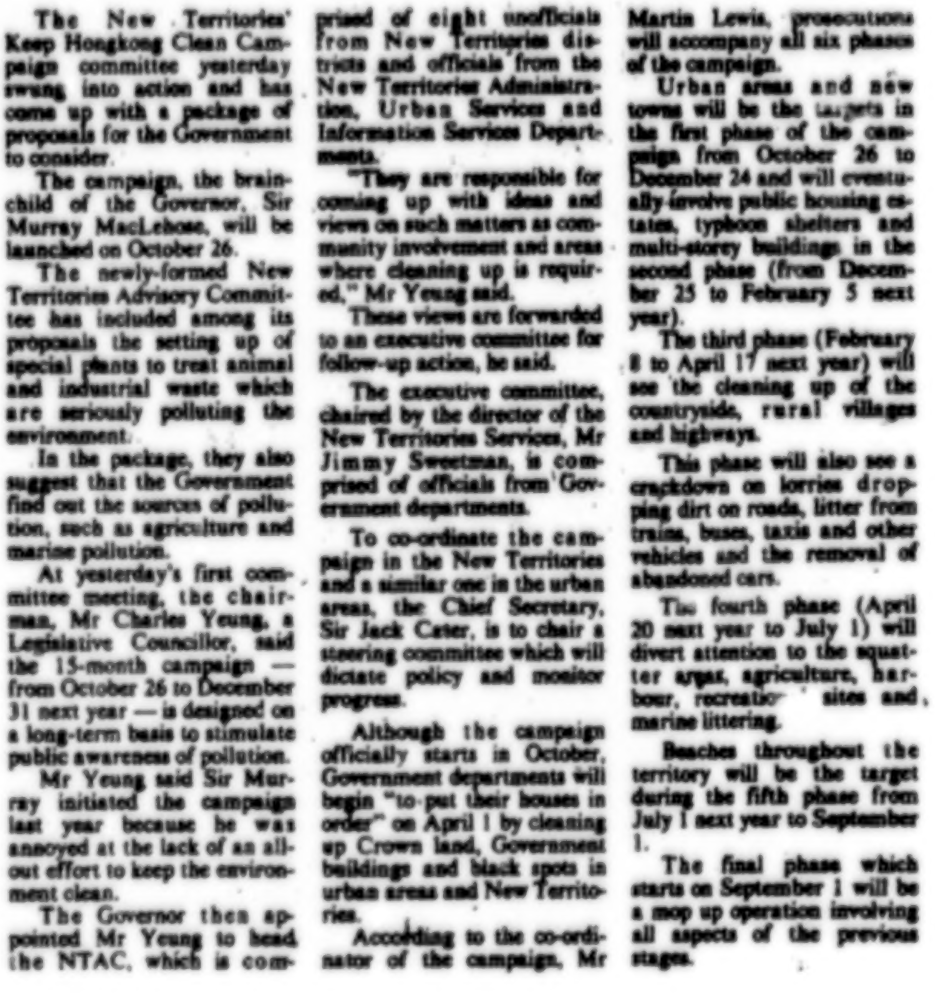
"In a year's time we will have units for noise and vibration control, agricultural waste control, liquid effluent and solid waste control. The air pollution control unit will be strengthened."

CSO: 5000

WASTE TREATMENT PLAN PROPOSAL

Hong Kong THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST in English 29 Jan 81 p 17

[Text]



The New Territories' Keep Hongkong Clean Campaign committee yesterday swung into action and has come up with a package of proposals for the Government to consider.

The campaign, the brainchild of the Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, will be launched on October 26.

The newly-formed New Territories Advisory Committee has included among its proposals the setting up of special plants to treat animal and industrial waste which are seriously polluting the environment.

In the package, they also suggest that the Government find out the sources of pollution, such as agriculture and marine pollution.

At yesterday's first committee meeting, the chairman, Mr Charles Yeung, a Legislative Councillor, said the 15-month campaign — from October 26 to December 31 next year — is designed on a long-term basis to stimulate public awareness of pollution.

Mr Yeung said Sir Murray initiated the campaign last year because he was annoyed at the lack of an all-out effort to keep the environment clean.

The Governor then appointed Mr Yeung to head the NTAC, which is comprised of eight unofficials from New Territories districts and officials from the New Territories Administration, Urban Services and Information Services Departments.

"They are responsible for coming up with ideas and views on such matters as community involvement and areas where cleaning up is required," Mr Yeung said.

These views are forwarded to an executive committee for follow-up action, he said.

The executive committee, chaired by the director of the New Territories Services, Mr Jimmy Sweetman, is comprised of officials from Government departments.

To co-ordinate the campaign in the New Territories and a similar one in the urban areas, the Chief Secretary, Sir Jack Cater, is to chair a steering committee which will dictate policy and monitor progress.

Although the campaign officially starts in October, Government departments will begin "to put their houses in order" on April 1 by cleaning up Crown land, Government buildings and black spots in urban areas and New Territories.

According to the co-ordinator of the campaign, Mr Martin Lewis, prosecutions will accompany all six phases of the campaign.

Urban areas and new towns will be the targets in the first phase of the campaign from October 26 to December 24 and will eventually involve public housing estates, typhoon shelters and multi-storey buildings in the second phase (from December 25 to February 5 next year).

The third phase (February 8 to April 17 next year) will see the cleaning up of the countryside, rural villages and highways.

This phase will also see a crackdown on lorries dropping dirt on roads, litter from trains, buses, taxis and other vehicles and the removal of abandoned cars.

The fourth phase (April 20 next year to July 1) will divert attention to the squatter areas, agriculture, harbour, recreation sites and marine littering.

Beaches throughout the territory will be the target during the fifth phase from July 1 next year to September 1.

The final phase which starts on September 1 will be a mop up operation involving all aspects of the previous stages.

CSO: 5000

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HOSPITAL SUCCESSFULLY TREATS SEWAGE, SLUDGE WITH ATOMIC ENERGY

Beijing BEIJING RIBAO in Chinese 15 Nov 80 p 1

[Article by Li Lengbing [2621 0397 0393] and Huang Huachang [7806 5478 2490]: "Technical Staff of Municipal Environmental Protection Institute and Beijing Tuberculosis Hospital Treats Sewage and Sludge with Atomic Energy"]

[Text] Scientists and technical personnel at the Beijing Institute of Environmental Protection and the Beijing Tuberculosis Hospital have obtained important results in their research on environment protection using atomic energy. Radiation treatment of hospital sewage and sludge not only kills disease-causing bacteria but also leads to side benefits. Treated sewage can be used in irrigation and sludge can be used as fertilizer without bringing radioactive pollution to the environment.

Beijing has almost 400 large and small hospitals and 2600 outpatient clinics. The sewage and sludge from these hospitals contain many bacteria, virus and parasites. The current method of treating hospital sewage in China is mostly using chlorine. Although chlorine treatment has relatively good disinfection effects under normal circumstances, it is ineffective to some chlorine-resistant bacteria and virus and it may also cause organic chlorine to form and produce secondary pollution to the environment. As for sludge disinfection, there has never been a satisfactory and reliable method in the past. Since October 1978, research assistant Wu Yunqi [0702 0061 1477] and assistant engineer He Shiqun [6310 0013 5028] of the Beijing Institute of Environmental Protection and research assistant Gao Dongzhe [7559 2639 0772] of the Beijing Institute of Tuberculosis have been working on disinfecting hospital sewage and sludge with gamma ray from Co-60. After 2 years repeated experimentation and overcoming many difficulties, their experiment has finally succeeded and they have recently written a systematic research report. In late October, the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau called upon experts, professors, engineers and doctors to evaluate this research achievement. The consensus was that this work represents the first systematic research in China on the disinfection of hospital sewage and sludge with radiation. Testings have shown that the method is easy to implement, conserves energy, and disinfects thoroughly. It has laid a foundation for hospital sludge treatment using nuclear technology. This research is at an advanced level in China and is also an encouraging achievement in the effort to surpass international standards. One shortcoming of this research is that, due to limitations of the present conditions in China, tests have not been conducted on intestinal virus. The evaluation panal suggested that a test plant should be built right away to obtain further data on the actual operation of treating hospital sludge with radiation.

9698
CSO: 5000

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

TWENTY PROVINCES, CITIES, REGIONS IMPOSE FINES FOR POLLUTION

Beijing GUANGMING RIBAO in Chinese 5 Jan 81 p 1

[Text] Beijing, 4 Jan (XINHUA)--In order to promote pollution management various enterprises and business units in industry and mining, 20 Chinese provinces, cities, and regions, based on the tentative National Environment Protection Act, imposed pollution fines in 1980 on 1,500 enterprises and business units that had released pollutants exceeding the quantity allowed by law.

Among the 20 provinces, cities and regions are Jiansu, Yunna, Hebei, Zhejiang, Hunan, Hubei, Anhui, Shaanxi, Gansu, Henan, Shanxi, Shandong, Guizhou, Jianxi, Fujian, Guangdong, Liaoning, Sichuan, Shanghai and Xinjiang. In general, the pollution fines collected are slightly higher than the normal operating costs of pollutant treatment facilities. The fines are stopped when a unit stops polluting by effective anti-pollution measures and the fines are escalated annually for units that are in a position to take anti-pollution measures but are not actively doing so.

A great majority of the Chinese industry and transportation enterprises and other units that release pollutants do not have anti-pollution facilities. For a long time many units have been freely releasing pollutants and threatening the environment without taking any economic responsibilities. Some enterprises installed anti-pollution equipment but lumped their operating expenses into product costs and reduced the margin of profit. This led to a phenomenon that makes no sense: those industries that freely pollute the environment enjoy low product costs and high profits and are considered progressive; those industries actively engaged in pollution reduction and environmental protection suffer from high product cost and low profit margin and are criticized by the authorities. This has seriously affected the effort to control pollution.

By imposing pollution fines this abnormal situation has been corrected and the practice promotes pollution control by plants and factories. In Suzhou there are 38 plants equipped with anti-pollution facilities but only six used them in the past. Since the pollution fines were imposed, all facilities are now engaged in normal operation.

The collected pollution fines have also generated a revenue for expenses required in pollution treatment. Nantong Municipality, Jiangsu, has so far collected 1.9 million yuan of which 1.67 million yuan has been committed as supplemental money for anti-pollution engineering.

9698
CSO: 5000

SHANDONG SUCCESSFUL IN IMPOSING FINES FOR DUMPING POLLUTANTS

Jinan DAZHONG RIBAO in Chinese 7 Dec 80 p 3

[Text] Since the issuance of the "(Tentative) Provincial Regulation on Assessing Fines for Dumping Hazardous Waste Water" by the People's Government of Shandong to the end of September 1980, fines have been collected from 164 industrial and business units in Jinan, Qingdao, Zibo, Zaozhuang, Changwei, Yantai and Jinning. This measure has prompted many dumping units to control the "three pollutants."

Since the practice of collecting fines for dumping hazardous sewage was put into effect, dumping units have become active in pollucant treatment and they are doing this at a faster pace. Among the 61 units fined in Jinan, Zaozhuang and Zibo, 15 units have treated their waste water to meet national standards and stopped paying fines after 1 month. In the meantime 14 units not being fined have also treated their sewage to the allowed standard set by the government. The sewage treatment facility at Jinan Petrochemical Plant, a plant completed and put into production in 1975, was designed and built along with the main plant facility but has not been operational for a long time. After the Standing Committee of the provincial and municipal people's congress visited the Jinan plant this year, plant leaders have made a major effort in sewage treatment. After 2 months of hard work, the plant has solved the clean water and waste water separation problem and has treated waste water containing oil, sulphur and phenols. There are now six treatment processes in full operation: oil separation, floating selection, gas exposure, petroleum extraction, and sand filtering, and the treated water has met national emission standards. The dumping rate has decreased from 4,000 tons per day to 2,000 tons per day and oil recovery has reached 100 tons per month.

Dumping fines have also promoted better business management, higher productivity and energy conservation. The industries dumping hazardous waste are mostly poorly managed and backward in technology. Weifang Paper Mill is such an example. This paper mill has long been a pollution source in the area and the pollution problem remained unsolved even though the authorities have allocated a total of 200 million yuan to the mill for pollutant treatment. After they were put on the list as among the first group of units to be fined, the paper mill leaders put water treatment as the top priority and led technical staff members to Shanghai and Suzhou in three study trips. Together with the technical staff, the plant leaders worked out a recovery and recycle program which makes use of a reverse current washing technique. Waste water from this paper mill has since decreased from 2500 tons per day to 1500 tons per day. In addition, a pulp recovery pool has been constructed to recover 2 tons of pulp per day, which amounts to a daily saving of 800-900 yuan.

9698
CSO: 5000

BRIEFS

POLLUTION MONITORING CENTER ANNOUNCED--Dubai, Feb. 5 (WAM) A centre to fight industrial pollution is to be set up in the country. It will have a special laboratory to carry out regular tests on water and air. This was decided today in the course of talks between Health Minister Hamad Abdul Rahman Al Madfa and Waleed Al Shareef, representative of the United Nations Program for Environment in the Middle East. Shareef, who arrived here earlier today, is on a tour of a number of countries in the region for talks with officials and specialists on industrial pollution and its effects. [Text] [Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English 6 Feb 81 p 3]

CSO: 5000

INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

WATER HYACINTH PEST--War has been declared on one of Africa's most beautiful pests--the water hyacinth. Scientists at research centres throughout the tropical world have established a new technology for the conversion of the water hyacinth--the worst water weed of all--into fertilizers and fuel. Hyacinth are an expensive nuisance. Massive growths on Africa's major waterways such as the Nile and Congo have seriously restricted boat traffic, the main transport link for agricultural products. The Sudan spends £2.5 million a year trying to control the weed and Zaire also faces a major problem as do many other African countries. Ten hyacinth plants, with their attractive lavender coloured flowers, can multiply to 600,000 and cover an acre of water within 8 months. Apart from interfering with boat traffic, they hinder hydro-electric installations, irrigation schemes and fish. They also cause flooding, increase water loss into the atmosphere and harbour many diseases. Work is now being done to convert hyacinth into biogas. This gas contains about 60 percent methane and up to 400 litres of gas can be produced for every kilo of treated hyacinths. Biogas can be used to produce gas for cooking and lighting. Suitable equipment is now being tested in the Sudan. [Text] [Lagos BUSINESS TIMES in English 27 Jan 81 p 5]

CSO: 5000

SEA EROSION THREATENS TOWN, INLAND AGRICULTURAL AREA

London WEST AFRICA in English 12 Jan 81 pp 55-57

[Excerpts] The problem of Keta, in Ghana's Volta Region, where the sea is steadily eating away a charming and ancient town, is not a new one. People have been worrying about it since 1907. But is has a new urgency now. I was shown the remains of the Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. Griffiths Acolatse, Rector of the Church, told me that a week after the wedding, when a strong tide and a high sea was running, they had been awakened at 2.30 in the morning by a loud bang. They had gone outside to watch one side of the church sliding away into the sea.

I was taken to Keta by Mr. Leo Tosu, Deputy Speaker of the Ghana Parliament, whose constituency Keta is. "There will be more destruction if there is no help," said the Rev. Griffiths.

Mr. Tosu explained that there were usually two periods of high risk: August to November, and April and May. In addition there were cycles of about five years, with the threats becoming greater and greater and then dying away. At the moment the threats were approaching a climax. There were great fears for April and May, unless something was done.

Keta was once a bustling, busy market town. In 1975 there were about 17,000 inhabitants; now there are only just over 5,000. We walked along the beach--the tide was out, and anyway things are quiet now--and I was shown scars from the November attack. An old building that housed the Ministry of Health and Sanitation was now only half a building. The police station moved away a few months ago. Abandoned some years ago were the remains of a filling station, mostly covered in sand; with no beach road left there were also no cars.

The road had moved inland, but it has now been further damaged. Load going on to Denu, 16 miles away, and then to Togo, must now be carried on the heads of the villagers for some miles before joining up with navigable road again. This brings some employment for the young people, but wrecks trade. It costs about ₵40 to move goods the 16 miles.

A fort built by the Danes in 1784 has a piece chewed, as it were, from its foundations.

Along the beach there are ghosts of previous attempts at saving Keta. Some ruined wooden groynes stretch out into the sea; the rusted remains of a steel sea wall now offers little resistance to the incoming waves; piles of huge boulders, brought from 80 kilometres away about three years ago, are not now providing adequate protection.

Harbour Blamed

There are people in Keta who claim that building of the Tema harbour disturbed the natural flow of water along the coast and caused their troubles. Others say the Akosombo Dam prevented the flow of water down the Volta river that previously kept the damaging seas away. However, a more scientific report indicates that for the past 50 years the sea has been eating into the coast at the rate of about 12 feet a year.

Some people in high places in Ghana say that it is a waste of money to fight against this and that the authorities should instead concentrate on rehousing the people of Keta. This is not a view that recommends itself to Mr. Tosu. For one thing the people of Keta do not wish to move.

Secondly, Mr. Tosu said that if the defence of Keta were abandoned there would be nothing to divide the sea from the huge lagoon of Keta, which lies immediately behind the town. The big seasonal tides would then flow into the lagoon, flooding all the villages around it and the low-lying fertile farmland stretching back to Anloga and Woe. Mr. Tosu calculates that abandoning Keta might mean eventually having to rehouse, not just 5,000 people, but 280,000 people.

At the moment the Keta district and the Anloga area are prosperous (apart from the town of Keta itself). Onions provide a saleable crop but they also grow cassava and other food crops. Fishing is also rewarding, both in the lagoon and the sea. One drives through well-tilled fields, past healthy and well-nourished children and freshly-painted houses. It is a corner of Ghana that has escaped the economic malaise that affects most of the country. But all might change if the sea is allowed to conquer Keta.

Dutch Report

What can be done? Mr. Tosu showed a recently-completed report by a Dutch team of experts from the Delft Hydraulics Laboratory. They originally studied the problems and reported in January, 1976, and in May, 1980, produced a follow-up report. The experts are not despairing, though they admit there is much uncertainty.

They considered three options. The one they recommend is the building of steel groynes stretching out to sea. They suggest three experimental ones immediately to be built at Keta itself; they would only cost $566,000. They calculate that if this has a good effect then a total of 30 groynes might be built to protect the whole coastline. The theory is (to simplify drastically) that it is the sideways flow of water that carts the sand away and that waves coming straight in actually deposit sand. In 1953 timber groynes were tried and produced "considerable accretion of the beach protected by these groynes." Then the coastline receded and the groynes were damaged and lost. In 1955 a timber sea wall was destroyed by the impact of waves. In 1961 a steel sheet-pile sea wall 5,400 feet long was partially successful (though it caused heavy erosion east of Keta). It was designed to last 40 years but failed in three to four years.

The second option considered in the 1980 report was a rubble mound beach wall. This would cost about $30m., and would also interfere with fishing methods.

The third option was the replenishment of the beaches by sand from a dredger. More research was needed on sources for the sand: perhaps the floor of the lagoon. The cost could not be calculated and there was some doubt about the effectiveness of this course.

The big advantage of the first option is that the experimental groynes could be built in a matter of weeks. It is possible that the initial cost of $566,000 could be provided by aid from Holland. It is more than likely that the cost of the rest of the groynes (if the experiment is successful) could also come from overseas aid. What is needed now is a decision and a commitment by the government.

The Keta story is old and has often been told. However, it would be a tragedy if people were to be bored by it. This April and May represent a sort of deadline. The consequences of doing nothing are incalculable.

CSO: 3000

MOZAMBIQUE

BRIEFS

UNSANITARY QUAGMIRES--We have already referred to the existence of unesthetic and unsanitary quagmires in our capital, those of a technological and of a natural origin. There are some others that are hybrid: they are due to technological deterioration and the lack of efficiency on the part of the competent structures. We are now referring to overflowing cesspools, which are encountered in various localities of the city and endanger our collective health. If cesspools are not serving their purpose because they have become stopped up, those responsible for their operation should be found and punished. It does not make sense for the Ministry of Health to combat disease when other structures are promoting it. There should be no quagmires of filthy water right in the middle of our streets splashing all pedestrians every time a speeding vehicle goes by. [Excerpts] [Maputo NOTICIAS in Portuguese 27 Jan 81 p 2]

CSO: 5000

FORESTRY ASSOCIATION ADVOCATES ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 28 Jan 81 p 17

[Article by Emeka Anyanetu]

[Text]

THE Forestry Association of Nigeria has called for the urgent creation of a National Environmental Advisory Committee for proper environmental management, to check the increasing frequency of natural disasters in the country. The call was made in the Resolutions announced at the end of their week long 10th annual conference, held in Sokoto, from November 24 to 28, 1980.

The release also called on the Federal and state governments to create new ministries of Forestry, Animal and Fisheries Resources from the existing ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources, as a matter of urgency, to facilitate speedy and efficient performance of forestry's increasing vital roles in the country's economy.

The association called for a stop to the low rating in priority being accorded forestry, and demands that it be given equal attention as other key resources of the country, for the Green Revolution to achieve the desired result.

While it appreciates the contributions of the Federal and state governments to the Arid Zone Afforestation programme, the association, wants a more substantial increase in their financial, contributions, in view of the magnitude of the desert encroachment problem of the country, so as to ensure a timely stop to the desert advance.

On the increasing environment, the association called for legislative compulsion of road construction companies and other industries, to embrace environmental protection in their operations, in order to avert further environmental disasters and soil erosion.

It suggested the participation in the association by all wood based industries, in view of the important contributions they could make to the association and forestry at large.

On manpower, the association drew the attention of the governments to the gigantic forestry projects now going on in the country and called for the harmonisation of salaries of holders of Forestry Higher Diploma with their colleagues from the polytechnics, so as to encourage the professionals as well as stop the incessant student crisis on the issue.

To arrest the growing scarcity of firewood and its astronomical rising cost, the association calls for large scale establishment of fast growing fuel wood plantations, to relieve the masses of the burden of expensive firewood.

The conference had earlier been declared open by the state's Commissioner for Agriculture, Alhaji Isa Kangiwa Mutawalim Argungu, who read the governor's message to the associat on.

The th me of the conference was "Forestry and the Environment". Over 1,000 participants from all participants from the Federal and states well as, from the universities and other wood based industries the conference.

Highlight of the numerous papers presented was the three man "Environmental Analysis of Ibadan Recurring Flood Disasters.

The analysis traced the flood to the global climatic change predicted by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) in 1976 and the poor environmental management of the ancient city.

Other finding of the analysis was that Ibadan's total annual rainfall has not changed for the past 15 years. Rather, the paper said that the rainy days had reduced, thereby resulting in higher rainfall intensity per day.

Malam Abdullahi Idrisu, Chief Conservator of Forests, Niger State, was returned unopposed as the national president of the Forestry Association of Nigeria at the 10th annual conference.

Delegates from all over the country had words of praise for the dynamic and effective manner, Malam Idrisu has piloted the association since 1979.

In appreciation of his able leadership, Malam Idrisu was unanimously mandated for another tenure of office.

Other officers elected include Mr A. E. Iyamabor, Chief Conservator of Forests, Bendel State; Dr. Akin Oguntala, an ecologist of Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria and Emeka Anyanetu of Federal Department of Forestry, the Publicity Secretary.

CSO: 5000

BRIEFS

DRIEST DECEMBER ON RECORD--Last December was the driest since records started at Seychelles International Airport eight years ago. Only 210 millimetres of rain fell in the month, compared with an eight-year average of 295.8 mm. Previous lowest total for December was 223.5 mm in 1977. [Text] [Victoria NATION in English 28 Jan 81 p 2]

CSO: 3000

BRIEFS

RAINS IN NATAL--Widespread rains fell in several areas of Natal and Zululand again at the weekend, boosting the sugar cane crop. The rain also assisted in arid areas of KwaZulu where cattle have been dying in the hundreds because of drought. Steady, soaking rain fell in the sugar belt of Zululand and also in parts of the Natal South Coast. In the Natal midlands vegetable farmers also welcomed fairly heavy downpours. In Durban it rained steadily on Saturday leading to the cancellation of mans sporting events. [as published] About 20mm was recorded at the Louis Botha Airport Midstation.--Citizen News Service. [Text] [Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English 9 Feb 81 p 3]

CSO: 5000

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

CADMIUM, ASBESTOS TO BE REPLACED IN INDUSTRIAL USE

Frankfurt/Main FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE in German 21 Jan 81 p 13

[Article by K.B.: "Minister of the Interior Baum Threatens the Economy: Environmental Protection To Be Sharpened; Work Places Not an Argument; Asbestos and Cadmium To Be Replaced"]

[Text] Bonn, 20 January--Minister of the Interior Baum has now announced that he wants to limit the utilization of asbestos and cadmium substantially. Asbestos is to be given up wherever danger arises for human beings and where it can be renounced without difficulties. The constraints will above all affect the asbestos cement industry, which accounts for roughly 70 percent of the utilization of asbestos in the FRG.

Baum urges that asbestos and the heavy metal cadmium be replaced by less dangerous materials to a far-reaching degree and that further improvements be made in the processing procedures. He wants to obtain an industrial sector agreement for the reduction of cadmium usage in the first instance for the pigment industry. Cadmium pigments are employed to 80 percent for the dyeing of high-value plastics. In addition, a decree is to prevent the further utilization of agricultural purification plant sediments, which contains quantities of cadmium and other heavy metals exceeding the tolerance levels.

Baum finds himself moved to initiate a "systematic" defense strategy against asbestos and cadmium by two reports of the Federal Environment Office which he submitted to parliament at the beginning of this week. In summarizing, the reports state that perceptions and fears of a growing danger posed by asbestos and cadmium for the entire population, and not only in the processing of these materials, had been found confirmed. The Federal Ministry of the Interior wants to coordinate a catalogue of countermeasures with the relevant ministries before the summer recess.

Baum does not hide the fact that in the preparation of the measures he finds himself in conflict with the affected industries and also with the Bonn ministries. The affected enterprises, with the support of the trade unions, works councils, and Ministers Lambsdorf and Ehrenberg, warn against sudden interventions for environmental protection on the part of the Ministry of the Interior. Such measures would not only threaten jobs, but entire enterprises and branches. Baum acknowledges that the Economic Association Asbestos Cement has now promised additional safety measures, above all for hobbyists working with asbestos. But the promised precautions do not suffice. The dispute is focused on the extent of the measures, he notes.

Baum gives industry to know that he is ready to show his teeth in a new phase of precautionary environmental policy which is about to start. Agreements with industrial branches have only a limited utility for environmental policy. For the protection of the environment there must at the least exist a threat of legal prescriptions, prohibitions and utilization constraints. Baum notes that environmental policy establishes obligations, and that the protection of the environment is not something that emerges by itself from the market economy. Progress can be attained only if the enterprise sector is subject to compulsion or pressure. It is under these auspices that Baum wants to conduct the talks of the Federal government with the automobile industry which have been announced. Baum believes that this branch needs to be emphatically induced, in spite of its difficulties at the moment, to reduce the exhaust gas and noise emissions of its cars. Baum expressed his disappointment that voluntary trials with multi-use milk bottles were finding only a weak echo.

The argument that measures were threatening work places Baum finds unconvincing: "There is no absolute command to preserve work places; this does not apply in other fields either--I am thinking of armaments export." Alluding to the leading firm in the asbestos cement branch, Eternit, Baum said: "I do not have the slightest reason to abstain from anything in the field of environmental policy for the sake of a single firm."

When asked whether he was not inciting hysteria among the population by publishing the reports about cadmium and asbestos, Baum answered: "Our society must bear with being informed about dangers."

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FINLAND

EDITOR LOOKS AT ENVIRONMENTAL GAINS OF LAST DECADE

Helsinki HUFVUDSTADSBLADET in Swedish 24 Dec 80 p 2

[Editorial by Jans- Magnus Jansson]

[Text] In connection with "The Year of the Environment 1980" and the recent conference Jan-Magnus Jansson notes that progress has been made in protecting the physical environment in Finland during the 70's. At the same time environment protection ideas are experiencing a certain crisis, and only slow improvement is taking place in legislation and administration.

"The Year of the Environment 1980" has not, as anticipated, influenced to any degree the political and administrative routine. Its greatest impact has been on the propaganda level, and here too, signs of a crisis can be detected in regard to the thinking about the environment. Ideas in regard to the protection of the environment have lost some of their vigor and news worthyness they had 10 years ago and without securing at the same time such a place in the gears of society that without further ado they can be assured a following. This apparently is one of the reasons for the obvious concern and impatience among environmental activists.

When the Year of the Environment had kind of an official climax with the "nationwide" seminar which was held on 15 December in the Finlandia House with representatives from the government, organizations and environmentalists, the most positive feature was the review of changes in the environment, both positive and negative, during the 70's. It was based on preliminary data, intended for a more comprenensive report on the "state of the environment" in Finland at the transition of the 70's to the 80's.

If one looks back 10 years, one must admit that great progress has been made in regard to environmental matters. This involves not so much outward measures as societal values. It is inevitable that this is reflected in the manner with which values are handled. If we go back to the 60's, it is amazing how all community planning was based solely on the economic argument whether it involved the exploitation of nature or developing the built-up environment. Today we cannot discuss such matters and exclude environmental views.

That is a tremendous change. It is all the more striking that it has taken place primarily outside official channels, largely through private organizations. We have the satisfaction, in Swedish-Finnish circles, that in a way we have been the pioneers in the field. On the political side, we can point to the early awareness of the Swedish Youth League in the 60's. Organizations such as Nature and Environment, Keep the Archipelago Clean, the Archipelago Council in Larsmo, the Inga-Sjundea-Kyrklatts Environmental Protection Society assumed the responsibility for endangered areas along the coast, which, to an exceptionally high degree, felt the impact of high-density (population) areas, industries and recreation.

Environmental measures usually involve costs and rarely result in directly clear economic results. Another thing is that long-range concern over the environment can be favorable, for example, in the form of savings resources and in better health for the population. Since the short-range perspective usually dominates our actions, a certain tension between environmental interests and economic interests is often quite common.

During the early part of the 70's, industry and environmentalists particularly clashed. Since then much has happened. The industrial representative at the national conference, Stig Hasto, noted that investment during the 70's in safe-guarding the water came to about 2 billion marks and investment in safe-guarding the air to 1 billion. More and more concerns regard as a matter of prestige to be able to point to production methods favorable to the environment. To invest initially in an environmentally sound manner can make good sense economically, since restructuring production can be both troublesome and expensive. It is, nevertheless, overly optimistic to think that as a consequence all points of friction between industry and environmental protection has been eliminated. This will be apparent when the clean air legislation is presented.

Recently, a new confrontation has developed; namely, between the environmentalists and the farmers. This has been evident in individual cases like Koijarvi or Flyttrasket, in the handling of gravel law and in several other matters. At the conference the speech of Heikki Haavisto, a producer, was not unexpectedly one of the most acrimonious. Without going into the matter further one can state that a confrontation between the nation's farmers and environmentalists would be the most calamitious reverse that the environmental movement could experience.

In his semi-official summary regarding concrete achievements in the care of the environment during the 70's, Professor Martti Markkula of the environmental protection board confirmed that significant progress had been made during the 70's although it has been uneven and counterbalanced by a deterioration of the environment in certain cases. The condition of the lakes has improved, while water quality in the streams and rivers has, in contrast, become poorer on the average. In regard to air pollution, the discharge by industry has varied greatly. One can be grateful for the improvement of the air in the cities that has taken place without any fanfare through the conversion of piping-in heat and by closing down trash burning plants.

At the present time the strongest criticism is being directed in any case against the government for it dilatoriness in legislation and for ineffective administration in regard to the environment. In regard to the "big" environment laws, only the waste law has been enacted and the results will apparently become obvious rather slowly. The fate of the gravel law will be a test as to what can be achieved in that area. The clean air legislation is technically ready but awaits the political all-clear signal, while legislation regarding noise and reform of water rights will be a long time in coming.

The political stalemate which has prevented the establishment of a ministry for environmental affairs will hardly be resolved with the present coalitions. Hence, one must be prepared to improve the operation of the environmental administration under the present arrangement. In addition, environmental questions are affected by a huge number of decisions which in general do not involve "environmental protection." The laying out of roads, channels and electrical power linge significantly affect the environment without one being able as a consequence to refer them to the environmental authority. Just as important as establishing an effective, central environmental authority is seeing that environmental views in some way - by special officials, by opinions, among other things, be observed everywhere at all levels and in all sectors where decisions are made, touching upon the environment.

A report on the environment can not be concluded without noting a political change. The middle parties, especially the Center Party, which earlier took the lead in the field, has fallen back, while the left has developed a greater interest in espousing politically environmental questions. The political parties which are losing their grasp on the environmental problem should realize that the environmental movement is only the outward sign of deep ideological changes in the community which no one disregards with impunity.

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OIL SPILLS PUT INCREASING 'PRESSURE' ON BALTIC STRAITS

Offshore Oil

Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 10 Jan 81 p 8

[Article by Per Sjogren]

[Text] On Friday some of the oil from "Jose Marti" was still lying around the Genoble and Edeso islands, while part of it had reached some islands of the western Jungfru and Namndo bays. The Coast Guard continues to work through the night. Although the consequences for the archipelago are bad the amount, approximately 200 tons, is only a fraction of the 40,000 - 70,000 tons that are spilled each year a. our coasts. In the long run the oil threatens not only the shores but our entire sea environment.

Shipping now accounts for a large part of the oil spills of the Swedish waters, of the Baltic and of Kattegat. But accidents like the most recent one at Dalaro cause only a small part of the spills. The part of the oil spills that is caused by tankers could be significantly lowered with an international agreement, but Sweden is reluctant to sign such an agreement.

According to an estimate that DAGENS NYHETER received from the Coast Guard between 40,000 and 70,000 tons of oil are released into our waters each year.

Shipping is responsible for one fourth of it, at the most 20,000 tons. Tanker accidents cuase oil spills of about 1,000 tons. But an oil spill like the one that we now had at Dalaro triggers large efforts.

The rain water tha runs directly into the sea brings with it 30,000 tons of oil per year. The rain water brings with it oil films from roads and other places directly into the sea.

All the rest are small factors in this huge oil bill. Small and large oil spills affect the animal and plant life of our waters. First the concentrated spills affect bird life.

Each year the Coast Guard catches between 30 and 40 ships that are releasing oil at sea. Only three or four of these are convicted in court.

"A large part of the sinners are Swedish ships. The rest represent several different nationalities," syas Bjorn Lostrom of the Coast Guard.

All shipping leaves oil behind it, but the tankers are the biggest problem. A tanker that has let out oil has to take in sea water as a ballast. When the ship then loads oil again the ballast water has to be pumped out. There is oil in that water and according to the rules only the water can be pumped into the sea and the oil should to into the waste cistern on board. But less cautious captains pump out the whole mess into the sea.

Separate tanks

There is now an international agreement aiming to create cleaner oceans. Three important points are:

1. Separate cisterns for the ballast water.

Then no sea water would ever get into the oil cisterns. The ballast cisterns would be placed so that they would also serve as a protection if the ship would hit a rock. This reduces the risk that oil is spilled. Ships with separate ballast cisterns started to enter the traffic last year.

When the convention becomes the general rule shipowners with older ships may choose between two alternatives. They can build separate cisterns into the ships or they can use a part of the oil cisterns for the ballast. The ship would thus have less space for the oil load.

2. A cleaning system that is based on the cleaning of the oil cisterns with oil under heavy pressure during the unloading of the load.

3. A gas system that decreases the oxygen content of the air of the oil cisterns. This would reduce the explosion risk.

All large shipping nations are agreeing about these rules, but the only nation to apply them is the United States, since 1 July of last year. Ships that do not abide by these rules are not allowed to enter American ports. Other nations, like Sweden, are waiting for others to follow the example.

Other kinds of discharges

Clarence Dybeck, of Salentank is very critical of this reluctance of the authorities.

Other spills from ships can be mentioned:

Ships of all kinds drain the engine rooms of oil mixed with water several times per day. They have to do this because of the fire risk. Most of these ships run on heavy oil. These discharges are not good either, but they are legal.

Freezer ships with bunker cisterns that are also ballast cisterns do in principle have the same problem as the tankers do. When they bunker oil the water has to be eliminated first. There are five or six such freezer ships in the Swedish commerce fleet.

Methods of tracing

When the latest oil spill hit the West Coast a lot was said about the possibilities to trade the oil.

"There are a couple of methods," says department chief Hans Eriksson of the National Administration of Shipping and Navigation.

One method involves the sampling of spilled oil for the determination of the chemical composition. If oil from a suspected ship has the same chemical composition or a very similar one the suspicion is founded. This is how Hans Eriksson solved the question of responsibility in connection with one of our latest oil spills. But he does not believe that evidence with this method would stand up in court.

Another method is particle measurement, a Swedish method that Eriksson considers ingenious, although it has been proven hard to handle at the testing occasions.

When a tanker has unloaded its load a liquid containing metal particles is poured into the ballast water. The liquid of every ship has its own composition. When spilled oil is detected at sea the sinner should be easy to find.

If the system would become internationally used, enormous bookkeeping procedures would be necessary.

In May last year a convention came into force with regard to the traffic on the Baltic. In due time this will increase the safety. Now a system is built up to report the location of all the tankers of the Baltic.

In the future it is possible that all environmentally hazardous transports will be monitored by means of radar.

Damage Below the Surface

[Article by Thomas Axner]

[Text] We are familiar with the extensive visible damages that occur as a result of the oil spills. What takes place below the surface is more unknown. A lot of this is due to the fact that the money has been spent more on cleaning up than on research.

The researchers of the Kristineberg Station of Marine Biology have the knowledge of only some of what takes place in the depths of the sea after oil has been spilled.

In the first phase the organisms that are floating on the surface are affected. These include plant and animal plankton--the basic foodstuff of the sea--as well as fish eggs (for example, cod) and fish larvae that take in the oil. Hereby normal development is impaired. Dysfunctions at the egg and larva state in malformation of the fishes if they survive. Fishes that are already developed do, however, have chemical instruments by means of which they detect oil at an early point which enables them to escape.

How the oil spreads

There are also organisms in the surface of the sea, which through their feces spread oil downward. The oil is also spread downward through the food.

In the second phase some oil is dissolved and sinks to the bottom while under favorable conditions up to 40 percent of the volatile components evaporate. Very little is known about where the gases then go. Some hydrocarbons from the oil are brought down with rain or snow.

The extent of the evaporation and the speed of the entire breakdown process is, among other things, dependent on the temperature of air and water, streams and the salt contents of the water. Our cold Northern waters are both an advantage and a disadvantage. They give us more time to handle the spills but the oil that we do not reach breaks down more slowly.

The bottom Is Covered

After evaporating and dissolving a thick mass of oil remains, which easily absorbs surface particles and then sinks to the bottom. Thereby some parts of the bottom got completely covered. The animals of the bottom are intoxicated and suffocated. They cannot cope with any change in the environment.

Also the parts of the bottom that are not covered with oil are badly affected. With repeated oil spills oil is layered in increasing concentrations. The animals of the bottom are the food of several kinds of fishes and the oil is thus carried further in the food chain. Along with this there is a bacterial breakdown of the oil which takes away oxygen from the bottom fauna and reduces the number of species.

Closer to the shore and the surface animals and plants have better developed protection mechanisms. They have adjusted to changing temperatures and salt concentrations and they can cope during one or several days in an unsuitable environment.

Storing oil

Some crustaceans, for instance lobsters, can store oil while clams are able to close their shells and dig into the ground.

Several animals of the shore vegetation are more threatened by low continuous oil concentrations for a long period of time than high concentrations for a short time. Their protection mechanisms are not as easily triggered. Small continuous spills thus cause a chronic intoxication of the shore animals. The number of animal species is gradually reduced.

If we cannot reduce the frequently repeated oil spills the oil that is stored goes further into the food chains. While the concentrations are low we cannot even be sure of where the oil is going. Neither do we know how much is remaining when the oil reaches the human being through food and we do not know the consequence thereof.

Clean-up But No Research Funds

[Article by Thomas Axner]

[Text] "When we had the last oil accident here on the West Coast 20 - 30 million crowns were spent on the immediate clean up, that is the gathering of oil and the cleaning of the coastline. But not an ore was spent on the long term damages, on the animal and plant life below the surface level. These damages are far more serious and in the long run they threaten the entire sea environment."

The critical voice belongs to Thomas Lundalv of the Kristineberg Station of Marine Biology in Fiskebackskil on the Bohus Coast. The station offers the opportunity to compare the vegetation and animal life of the sea since the 1920's with the situation of today.

"Since 1977 we have noticed a clear increase in the number of tumor causing organisms at large depths. A strange fish, the hagfish, has increased remarkably in number. Liver tumors of this eel are remarkably common."

"The hagfishes probably get their tumors from the dead animals that are their main food," says Thomas Lundalv.

"Eiders and seals contain high levels of PCB and DDT and among fishes the levels are increasing. Cod liver is now on the black list in Gothenburg."

It is not possible to determine that this is caused by the oil. Other discharges, like cadmium, copper and mercury may also cause the damages.

"But, continues Thomas Lundalv, we know that the many small discharges cause the oil to be layered successively on the bottom of the sea. The concentration of the oil increases and in order to break it down oxygen is needed. Thus there is less oxygen left for the organisms of the sea--the stronger ones survive, the weaker ones die. The oil suffocates and intoxicates and the number of species is reduced."

The Brio Fiord

Thomas Lundalv tells that 18-20 [illegible] discharges occur simply during loading and unloading at Scanraff in the Bro Fiord.

"At these sites booms are not put out around the ships as a safety measure. Instead millions of crowns are spent on the clean-up in connection with the spills."

Thomas Lundalv is not only attacking Scanraff. Scanraff simply happens to be located close to the Kristineberg Station of Marine Biology. Similar smaller discharges take place all around the coast of Sweden.

"As long as we cannot stop the discharges we can at least gather experience about how the oil affects the sea ecology. This is not currently done. The Swedish Institute for Water and Air Pollution which is responsible does indeed take samples of sea fowl and shores. But the information about the effects of oil on the sea environment is not gathered."

The danger is that the harmful effects on the sea environment finally affect us, the human beings, through the food that we get from the sea--fish, shell-fish etc. But Thomas Lundalv also sees economical reasons to study the effect of oil and hydrocarbons on the sea.

"We are losing a resource that is almost inexhaustible. Each hectare of the sea can provide us with not only 20 kilograms of fish, but the clam cultivations give us up to 100 tons per hectare per year.

The West Coast is still alive. The streams are strong, the effects of the spills are spread out and plankton that is affected by oil is exchanged with fresh plankton.

But is there really room only for black pessimism? Can nothing be done?

"If the oil is earmarked I believe that many of the small spills would disappear. The rpoblem is that the lighter heating oils cannot be marked. They are also the most toxic ones."

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SDP ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM WEAKENS CHEMICAL SPRAY PLANK

Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 21 Dec 80 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] If our memory does not totally betray us --and it certainly does not--then Sten Andersson stood 1 day in August 1979 at Sergel's Place, excited by a demonstration promising that air spraying would become totally prohibited if the country, after the upcoming election, would get a Social Democratic Government. Both Olof Palme and Sten Andersson based this on the assumption that the difference in cost between mechanical clearance and chemical spraying would be only 10 million crowns.

"Life is worth that much money," said Sten Andersson, when he met Sara Lidman at at Sergel's Place.

It was not totally unexpected to find that the "OA" of DAGENS NYHETER's editorial pages fell almost into trance when he faced Andersson's show off: "That is how a grindstone should be pulled, that is how a concrete and apparently clear-cut electoral promise should be introduced."

The embarrassing thing for Andersson was that not a single figure was right. Apart from that he referred to a Social Democratic proposal for total prohibition, which had been denied by the Conservatives in the spring parliament of 1979. But there was no such demand for total prohibition in that motion!

Of the promised total prohibition nothing was left when the Social Democrats a few days ago presented in a hurry an environmental program that was thrown together. It was going to be easy for the communists to say no to spraying--but a general prohibition, no thanks!

On Thrusday the parliamentarily elected committee lead by the director-general Engstrom presented their first proposal "The Control of Forest Underbrush" to the Minister of Agriculture, Dahlgren.

It is interesting reading. The forest and forestry products are a national asset that we cann ot be without. Modern rational forest requires the intense fighting of so-called underbrush in order to ensure a good growth of the coniferous forest stock.

The manual fighting of underbrush would require between 6000 and 8000 people. It would be hard to recruit and train such a labor force. Mechanical clearance would be four to five times more expensive than chemical control. The cost for the future would be 170 - 220 million crowns more per year. From the environmental point of view the chemical control of forest underbrush through air spraying is the least risky alternative.

During the worst controversy after Sten Andersson's electoral promise it was pointed out that only one thousandth of the forest land is sprayed each year and that land needs spraying only every 17 years.

The Engstrom committee has set up three alternatives one of which is total prohibition. The alternative that is recommended is, however, that chemical control be continued, whereby the communes have the right to determine which areas are sensitive with regard to environment and recreation. Within these areas there is a possibility for prohibition.

The forestry committee also has the authority to point out areas where manual clearance could be preferable.

There is large political [illegible]ity in this matter. One member, the communist, is reserved against total prohibition--the Andersson promise.

What is Sara Lidman going to say about all this? Social acrobatics, huh?

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